

Struggle For Student Minds

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In the years immediately after World War II, the Soviet Union took the lead in organizing and propagandizing the world student movement. The World Student Congress has been Communist-dominated since its founding in 1946 in Prague. In that first meeting, the Communist delegations gained control of key positions and imposed the Moscow delegation's agenda. The first Soviet vice president of the meeting was Aleksandr N. Shelepin, who later became chairman of the Soviet State Security committee.

The National Student Association, largest student body in this country, broke away from the world union of students in 1948 after the Communist conquest of Czechoslovakia. Opposed by the Communist leaders of the union as maliciously conservative, they were regarded here as too far to the left. They had nowhere to go to raise funds for attending world affairs. But actual left-wing American students managed to attend world-

union meetings, all but two of them in the last 20 years behind the Iron Curtain.

In 1952, the Central Intelligence Agency decided that the students in the national association could do useful work for their government by representing the American viewpoint in these foreign meetings, albeit that viewpoint was more liberal than not. CIA began to donate an average of \$200,000 to the association, but with only the two top association officers each year aware of this. It was feared that some students might misunderstand this aid and also that the association's views would be misjudged abroad.

Now one of the most deadly of the anti-U. S. propaganda magazines has made a great expose of this horrendous affair. Members of Congress are aghast that the CIA had subsidized the student activities for so long, and embarrassed us in world opinion. What a lot of tommyrot!

President Johnson has ordered the grants stopped as of Jan. 1 last. Now, why is it right for Communists to finance their student organizations to influence young minds, but wrong for the United States? The American students were given no government line to peddle, like their adversaries who openly and vociferously fought for the communist line. The Americans reacted as intelligent democratic young men and women in these world forums. They had no other way of going unless they accepted communist funds, as others did.

We shouldn't let such prudery throw us. Let's be glad there was a CIA to fight our battle in the world youth forums of tomorrow's leaders.